

CLAIMS:

We claim:

1. A composite, multi-tier service level agreement (SLA), comprising:
a plurality of service offerings having both internal use only service level objectives and external service level objectives; and,
a plurality of SLAs combined into a single, composite SLA, each of said plurality of SLAs corresponding to a specific one of said service offerings, said plurality of SLAs in said composite SLA having hierarchical organization based upon dependencies between said service offerings.
2. The composite, multi-tier SLA of claim 1, wherein each of said plurality of SLAs corresponds to one of an outsourced service offering, an internal service offering and an external service offering.
3. The composite, multi-tier SLA of claim 1, wherein at least one of said plurality of SLAs exposes an external service level objective of a corresponding internal service offering which has been redefined as an internal use only service level objective in an SLA at a higher tier in said hierarchical organization.
4. A method of constructing a composite, multi-tier service level agreement (SLA), the method comprising the steps of:
creating an internal SLA for an internal service offering;

further creating an external SLA for an external service offering which depends upon said internal service offering;

combining said internal SLA with said external SLA to form a composite SLA; and,

arranging said internal and external SLAs in a hierarchy within said composite SLA based upon dependencies between said internal and external service offerings to form a composite, multi-tier SLA.

5. The method of claim 4, further comprising the steps of:

yet further creating an outsourced SLA for an outsourced service offering upon which at least one of said external and internal service offerings depend;

further combining said outsourced SLA in said composite SLA; and,

further arranging said outsourced SLA along with said internal and external SLAs in said hierarchy.

6. The method of claim 4, further comprising the steps of redefining an external service level objective in an SLA which has been combined and arranged in said composite SLA to an internal use only service level objective.

7. The method of claim 5, further comprising the steps of redefining an external service level objective in an SLA which has been combined and arranged in said composite SLA to an internal use only service level objective.

8. The method of claim 4, further comprising the step of exposing said composite, multi-tier SLA to a customer over a data communication network.

9. The method of claim 4, wherein the arranging step further comprises the step of prohibiting dependency loops within said hierarchy.

10. A machine readable storage having stored thereon a computer program for constructing a composite, multi-tier service level agreement (SLA), the computer program comprising a routine set of instructions for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

creating an internal SLA for an internal service offering;

further creating an external SLA for an external service offering which depends upon said internal service offering;

combining said internal SLA with said external SLA to form a composite SLA;

and,

arranging said internal and external SLAs in a hierarchy within said composite SLA based upon dependencies between said internal and external service offerings to form a composite, multi-tier SLA.

11. The machine readable storage of claim 10, further comprising the steps of:

yet further creating an outsourced SLA for an outsourced service offering upon which at least one of said external and internal service offerings depend;

further combining said outsourced SLA in said composite SLA; and,

further arranging said outsourced SLA along with said internal and external SLAs in said hierarchy.

12. The machine readable storage of claim 10, further comprising the steps of redefining an external service level objective in an SLA which has been combined and arranged in said composite SLA to an internal use only service level objective.

13. The machine readable storage of claim 11, further comprising the steps of redefining an external service level objective in an SLA which has been combined and arranged in said composite SLA to an internal use only service level objective.

14. The machine readable storage of claim 10, further comprising the step of exposing said composite, multi-tier SLA to a customer over a data communication network.

15. The machine readable storage of claim 10, wherein the arranging step further comprises the step of prohibiting dependency loops within said hierarchy.